

**Communications & Marketing Plan**

 **Bristol Chamber of Commerce**

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**We Are The Bristol Chamber of Commerce**

***…******Where Business and Community Meet***

**Vision Statement**
The Bristol Chamber of Commerce is the unified voice of business advocating for a progressive, innovative and sustainable economic climate.

**Mission Statement**
Develop, support and deliver successful strategies and services designed to inspire economic vitality.

**Core Values**
Leadership ~ Integrity ~ Influence ~ Innovation ~ Collaboration

**Critical Goals**

1. *Advance Region's Economy:* Promote and enhance a vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy.
2. *Improve Quality of Life:* Foster a high ranking quality of life for all residents.
3. *Enhance Members' Success:* Provide targeted products, services, events and programs.
4. *Organization Improvement:* Position the organization and its staff for long term success.

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**Communications Plan**

**Executive Summary/Annual Goals**

A membership organization, the Bristol Chamber of Commerce was established in 1909. Since that time, the Chamber has been the voice of the business community, representing both Bristol, Tennessee and Bristol, Virginia. It is the only Chamber in the country with a 5-star accreditation that represents two cities and two states.

The Bristol Chamber of Commerce strives to maintain a stable and dynamic economy which provides high employment for all economic resources. This is accomplished by working to advance, protect and serve the business interest of the community. In addition, encouraging a unified public spirit in promoting the general community welfare complements this effort. Through its divisions such as the Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau; Community, Governmental and Leadership Development; Member Relations; Finance and Administration; Gold Club; and Retail Economic Development, the Chamber is concerned with a broad spectrum of community needs and challenges in education, government, urban planning, social problems and infrastructure needs.

The Communications division works to effectively communicate the initiatives, positions, programs and accomplishments of the Bristol Chamber to its members, the media and the community. The division works closely with the senior staff, event managers, and volunteer leaders to ensure consistent branding and messaging. The messaging is focused on the member viewpoint and is constantly evaluated to ensure we meet their needs.

**Objective A:** Provide support to the various Chamber divisions, initiatives and affiliates in an effort to help them achieve their objectives

**Objective B:** Generate greater visibility for the Chamber through a communication plan that not only keeps the membership informed about our activities, but also elevates the understanding of the value of the Chamber and its activities.

**Objective C:** Develop and implement a public relations strategy that will influence public opinion regarding the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and create more goodwill for it among its major audiences, including members, non-members, the public sector, etc.

**Objective D:** Promote member networking events in order to increase member participation and retention with the Chamber. Encourage the information exchange between members, and identify opportunities for members to enhance their success.

 **Communications Division is responsible for:**

* Developing and implementing the communications strategies for all programs, initiatives and events
* Providing copy all publications and promotional materials
* Public and Media Relations
* Advertising Sales for Clout
* Electronic newsletters
* Web site material

**Annual Goals:**

* Continue to grow and enhance meaningful programs, events, seminars and networking opportunities.
* Create avenues through which members can expand their business.
* Build a Communications program to promote benefits of membership to investors.
* Increase the Chamber’s membership base through new member sales and improved membership retention.
* Increase value-added products and services for members.
* Actively engage the business community in programs and events that contribute to the development of a positive business climate.
* Strengthen the Chamber’s profile as an organization committed to the successful growth and development of its members.
* Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber.
* Provide a means of communication through which Bristol can celebrate local strengths and successes.
* Position the Chamber as a regional leader.
* Increase the number of visitors to Bristol.
* Facilitate efforts to market Bristol as the official “Birthplace of Country Music” and home of Bristol Motor Speedway.
* Preserve and maintain heritage and culture of Bristol.
* Ensure future financial stability of the Chamber as a result of conservative budgeting; analyze historical data and aggressively capture new income streams for all programs.
* Participate in public/private partnerships.
* Provide an environment where educators and businesses work together to ensure a qualified workforce.
* Develop future community leaders.
* Create a pro-business environment through informative governmental initiatives.
* Be a leader in building coalitions through the region.
* Serve as a conduit to provide timely information on legislative and governmental issues affecting business.
* Serve as a resource partner with local economic development entities.
* Facilitate efforts to ensure a healthy community in which to live, work and play.
* Protect and conserve natural resources recognizing that the stewardship of the environment is essential to the economy.
* Utilize cutting-edge technology for enhancement of Chamber programs and services.
* Make a vital impact through community service related projects.
* Manage the distribution of relocation information through data collection, lead fulfillment and targeted promotional activities.

**Division Staff:**

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**Section I: Branding**

**Brand Essence**

Where business and community meet.

**Brand Positioning**

**Who**: The chamber is an advocate for its broad and diverse members businesses.

**What**: The chamber leverages and enhances the talents and resources of its members to create a positive business climate and success in the community

**How:** The Bristol Chamber of Commerce’s mission is to “Develop, support and deliver successful strategies and services designed to inspire economic vitality.”

**Why:** The chamber improves the economic vitality and quality of life for our diverse region to ensure the success of our members and the community.

**Target Audience:**

- businesses (all sizes)

- young, wired professionals (connected online, non-joiners)

- minority business community

- all levels of professionals

- current members (accept and engage)

- community at large (value perception – general support)

- prospective members

- elected officials

**Value Proposition**

Template - Audience Needs / Chamber Promise / Desired target belief / Examples

**Return On Investment**

* time and money investment
* smart business investment
* how we do it (see below)

1. We represent a strong business voice

As the voice of business, advocacy efforts are focused on the Business View of issues that impact your business investment including growing our economy in a responsible and balanced way. .

2. We represent opportunities to make quality business connections

You can make more contacts, more efficiently, than in most any other setting.

3. We represent accurate business information and advice through the Bristol Entrepreneurial Center.

You can count on the Chamber statistics to help you make good business decisions. As well, you can confidentially discuss your growth plans with a successful and seasoned business executive.

4. We represent business marketing avenues

You can expose your product or service to the who's who of business through sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

5. We represent business leadership experiences

There are plenty of opportunities to grow your leadership talents through many volunteer opportunities in programs, projects and issues.

6. We represent business vision for our region

The needs of our area in education, transportation, infrastructure, legislation and workforce are always on the Chamber's priority list for attention.

7. We represent business innovation growth

We help create knowledge based businesses and higher wage paying jobs by supporting and encouraging the success of innovative ideas and promoting the strength of entrepreneurship.

**Keywords**

**Connecting:**

**Connecting IS**: member to member networking / member to resources / forming alliances regionally; advocacy – connecting business to government

**Connecting IS NOT**: serving government needs; convening but not engaging; ignoring member needs

**Leader/leadership/leading:**

**Leading IS**: Well-regarded. Evolving. Experienced. Skilled. Visionary. Wise; progressive; not afraid to take a stand; convening interested parties; asking/hearing member input

**Leading IS NOT**: Complacent. Rigid. Arrogant. Bureaucratic. Risk-averse

**Innovative:**

**Innovative IS**: Progressive, Leading-edge, Continually improving, Incremental, Creative, Inquisitive, constantly evaluating deliverables; targeting programs; ThinkTEC; tackling issues or advocating on issues others won’t; proactive; targeting trends – minorities, young profs.; taking risks; building a strong internal infrastructure

**Innovative IS NOT**: Traditional – status quo; Confined; Historic; Satisfied; Finished; focusing on internal issue only

**Community:**

**Community IS:** the business community; the region; economic issue affecting our citizens; focus on educational improvements/deliverables; quality of life issues

**Community IS NOT**: good ole boy network; closed table; closed leadership; answering to others’ agendas

**Advocacy:**

**Advocacy IS:** connecting to government; voice for business; asking for input; keeping members informed; focus on education needs and development; measuring effectiveness;

**Advocacy IS NOT**: agenda based on outside influence; speaking only for “big business”

**Integrity/Accountability:**

**Integrity/Accountability IS**: delivering on promises; standing firm on behalf of members; keeping members informed; grading our legislators; admitting mistakes; providing statistical resources and information

**Integrity/Accountability IS NOT**: operating in anyone’s pocket; keeping secrets

**Involved/Engaged:**

**Involved/Engaged** **IS**: issue forums; volunteer opportunities; participating in other organizations/boards; convening issue discussion amongst interested parties

**Involved/Engaged IS NOT**: letting others take the lead; not giving back to business or community

**Section II: SWOT Analysis**

**Strengths**

• Staff, talent and dedication

• Volunteers – particularly leaders•

\* Extremely involved Chair/board

• Strong reputation

• Flexible and adjust rapidly

• Strong public policy effort

• In-house research

• The cities of Bristol – we have an amazing product

• Strong relationship with other community organizations

• Strong financial management

• Five-star status

• CEO and management staff tenure

• Strong ethics

• Make sure we do the right thing instead of the easy thing

• Willingness to learn new things and adapt to change

• New website

**Weaknesses**

• Resources, communications/marketing budget

• Time, money and people

• Population who don’t understand what we do

• Staff (some set in their ways, don’t set goals, some more open to change than others)

• Technology

• Lack of fresh perspectives

• Diversity of staff and volunteers

• Geography

**Opportunities**

• To effect positive change in workforce development

• New and better ways to interact with our members

• Potential in every department to move to a higher level - held back because of resources?

• With enough time and resources we could do anything

• New and expanding economic engines

• Changing elected officials

• Capital campaign for programs

• Product development

• Attracting new membership base from new areas

• To be revalidated as a Five-Star chamber

**Threats**

• Perception of what we do

• viewed as part of city/municipality government structure – show independence

• viewed as only representing big business

• Chamber doesn’t do anything for me – I don’t see any return on investment (time or money)

• Other business organizations

• Finances

• The economy

• How do we remain relevant to different generations in business at the same time

• Technology

• Retiring members

• Local government (duplication of efforts)

• Elected officials

**Competitors**

• Other Chambers

• Believe in Bristol

**Strengths relative to our competition**

• Local

• Staff

• Political connections

• We are good at what we do

• Influential board

• Regional view of issues

• Unify

• Educate

• Advocate

**Differentiation from our competitors**

• The fact that we are broader due to representation of two cities, two states

• We represent all business, not just certain sector

**Differentiation for our competition**

• Easier to be a hero if you only focus on one business

• Resources / targeted position

**Section III: Program of Work with Action Steps**

**Purpose:** To effectively communicate the initiatives, positions, programs and accomplishments of the Bristol Chamber to its members, the media and the community.

**Objective A**: Provide support to the various Chamber divisions, initiatives and affiliates in an effort to help them achieve their objectives through strategic marketing and executing communication/promotional deliverables.

**Action Steps**

1. Support the communications needs of the Chamber’s Membership, Leadership, Governmental, Education, Keep Bristol Beautiful and Convention and Visitor’s Center programs, including event promotion, web site information, PR campaign, writing opportunities, and compiling and distributing weekly e-newsletter.

2. Effectively promote Chamber events (for example, the Christmas Parade and Great American Cleanup) and programs to the membership and the greater business community.

3. Participate in event planning through scheduled committee meetings at relevant stages in the project – theme/initial program development.

4. Provide website services and manage technical aspects of all Chamber branded websites.

5. Promote members doing business with other members through ongoing program that promotes members doing business with other members – along with the Member to Member Discount program.

6. Provide support and marketing strategy for the Chamber’s green initiative including education and communication opportunities.

7. Work with ambassadors group to strengthen it as a marketing tool and towards member retention.

**Objective B:** Generate greater visibility for the Chamber through a communication plan that not only keeps the membership informed about our activities, but also elevates the understanding of the value of the Chamber and its activities including the image campaign, print and electronic communication and using interactive media.

**Action Steps**

1. Continue to enhance the effectiveness of the Chamber’s publications, particularly Clout and the Membership Directory, by constantly evaluating content, design and distribution.

2. Evaluate content and design for weekly e-blast newsletter.

3. Keep media well informed with press releases, press conferences as needed.

4. Continue to utilize social media as an effective tool for getting information out to media and the community.

5. Enhance Clout (now on Chamber website) for members.

6. Make information readily available to members/community on new Chamber website.

**Objective C**: Develop and implement a public relations strategy that will influence public opinion regarding the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and create more goodwill for it among its major audiences, including members, non-members, the public sector, etc. through relationships with the media, involvement with industry groups, writing opportunities and interactive media.

Action Steps

1. Build and maintain relationships with the area media representatives.

2. Seek and enhance opportunities to further existing relationships with area media, i.e. yearly luncheon

or dinner.

3. Report to the staff and Executive Committee annually regarding media coverage of Chamber activities.

4. Leverage skills of experienced PR staff to proactively pitch stories, features, quotes highlighting Chamber leaders, initiatives.

5. Find writing opportunities to provide exposure for the Chamber and its initiatives.

6. Use new technology options to expand publicity reach – social media and others.

**Objective D:** Promote member networking events in order to increase member participation and retention with the Chamber. Encourage the information exchange between members, and identify opportunities for members to enhance their success.

1. Promote Member Involvement

a. Promote Member Appreciation Events as a membership activation port of entry.

b. Promote other opportunities for members to become involved and provide personalized involvement/volunteer proposals.

c. Manage Chamber events and programs (Business After Hours, Ribbon Cuttings, Ground Breakings, First Friday Business Briefings) as networking opportunities among members.

**Section IV: Strategy/Action Items for Each Program/Service**

**Membership**

**Strategic Priority: Promote and expand volunteer and educational opportunities offered to members. Action Items:** *Business & Education Seminars; Post volunteer opportunities on the website and provide an online volunteer form; Develop survey to assess the individual interests of members and engage them in Chamber programs i.e. KBB, Governmental, Leadership, CVB; Enhance Ambassador Program.*

**Strategic Priority: Provide advertising/sponsorship opportunities to increase member’s recognition and visibility in areas best suited to meet their marketing needs. Action Items:** *Enhance new member information packet; Membership Directory; Move To initiative; Quarterly Magazine (Clout); Weekly Email Blast; Bristol Business Resource Center; Chamber Website Banner Ads; Table Sponsorships for First Friday and Annual Awards; Affinity Program; Special Events: Ribbon Cuttings, First Friday Breakfast Briefings, Grand Openings and Ground Breakings, Christmas Parade; Chamber programs such as KBB, LEAD, BYL, Governmental and CVB.*

**Strategic Priority: Identify member needs and expectations in order to provide programming that enhances membership value. Action Items:** *Expand Affinity partnerships with businesses in the region; Develope a more effective referral program; Develop tiered membership opportunities; Conduct an annual survey of the entire membership to gather needed input; Conduct a survey at the one-year anniversary of membership to assess the impact of the first year membership.*

**Strategic Priority: Enhance membership recruitment efforts to build a stronger membership base and increase member visibility in the local community. Action Items:** *Visit potential member businesses and communicate the benefits of membership; Generate mailing list of potential members for letters of encouragement to join the Chamber sent by the President/CEO; Effectively target under-represented segments of the business community to grow membership base and to provide beneficial programs; Develop an online new member referral program; Enhance new member recognition to maximize the benefit of membership; Introduction at the monthly First Friday Business Briefing; Listing in Weekly Email; Listing in Chamber Voice printed and included monthly in the Bristol Herald Courier; Listing in Quarterly Membership Update with the possibility of photo inclusion.*

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**Strategic Priority: Establish a Retention Plan to strengthen the renewal rate of current membership. Action Items:** *Implement Member Mentoring Program to encourage new or non-active members to attend an event with another member, Ambassador, or staff person; Develop “Email the Board” where members can ask questions, post complaints, concerns, or tell us what we are doing right; Thank You notes written by Board Members to new members and Gold Club members; Notes and addresses available at monthly Board meeting; Develop Surveys for Membership; New Member Survey sent at 90 days; General Membership Survey sent annually; Explore the possibility of Automated Voice Reminders; Explore the possibility of WebCam messages from President/CEO at renewal date; Implement business segmented roundtable discussions; Explore “Tiered Dues” or Participation Level Dues Structure.*

**Strategic Priority: Recruit and Retain Gold Club Members/Investors. Action Items:** *Enhance Gold Club brochure to use as a recruitment/retention piece for Gold Club Members/Investors highlighting benefits of investment; Maximize exposure of Gold Club Members/Investors at events and in publications; Listed in FFBB program; Banner displayed at events and in Chamber lobby; Gold Club table available at FFBB; Highlight individual Gold Club businesses in weekly email; Organize opportunities for annual Gold Club visits by Ambassadors, Board Members, or Staff; Develop target list of potential Gold Club members to be invited to a Gold Club breakfast.*

**Strategic Priority: Increase Communication between Members, Chamber Staff and Board of Directors. Action Items:** *Develop “Email the President” where members can ask questions, post complaints, concerns, or tell us what we are doing right; Thank You notes written by Board Members to new members and Gold Club members.*

**Business & Education**

**Strategic Priority: Promote communication and awareness among area businesses and industries. Action Items:** *Conduct workshops/seminars to discuss, teach and inform attendees on business issues and trends; Indentify workshop topics to meet training needs; Explore collaboration that would leverage resources for a healthy workforce.*

**Strategic Priority: Continue to develop the Bristol Business Resource Center (BBRC). Action Items:** *Enhance marketing plan for BBRC; Recruit additional service providers; Continue to collect measurable data for BBRC; Continue to provide more services and training opportunities for business owners to ensure viable business climate.*

**Strategic Priority: Assist employers who wish to recruit and retain the best quality employees in a changing labor market. Action Items:** *Educate chamber members on job training programs available through higher education centers; Work collaboratively with regional Workforce Investment Boards and the Alliance for Business and Training to inform industry of available grants and training for incumbent or displaced workers; Work cooperatively with Technology Councils to support strategies that will result in high-wage jobs, formation of technology-based companies, and insure a technology based workforce; Encourage a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.*

**Strategic Priority: Serve as a resource partner with local economic development entities. Action Items:** *Provide referrals and potential prospect contacts to economic development entities; List on chamber’s web site information to include demographics, vital economic data and statistics; Participate in economic development functions, visits, calls and meetings as needed; Support competitive tools that positively affect infrastructure, tax policies and regulations, workforce development, a clean environment and technology initiative; Support prudent incentives for business attraction and expansion.*

**Strategic Priority: Promote relationship between business and education. Action Items:** *Continue working with school systems to increase high school graduation rates and raise test scores; Maintain Workforce Development Program between eighth grade students and local businesses and industries promoting Math, Science & English; Align education goals with those of state and federal curriculums, mandates and governance; Support community colleges and technology centers to have the flexibility and funding to provide training programs that meet job demands; Increase business support of K-12; Encourage leadership (schools and business community) to improve performance of at-risk children; Coalescing education and business to achieve a unifying vision for our school systems; Encourage increased collaboration among the regions higher education institutions to create effective partnerships in research, innovation and technology; Participate in regional initiatives that address education and workforce results; Develop Partners In Education to provide parents and industries with the latest information on education reform, scholarships and educations assistance programs for students and adults; Coordinating and implementing TN and Commonwealth Scholars programs to develop a more qualified workforce; Encourage post-secondary education to increase number of adult learners and bring the region up to national average.*

**Governmental Relations**

**Strategic Priority: Represent the interests of business at the local, state and federal levels. Action Items:** *Visit Richmond and Nashville legislative offices annually; Focus on long-term permanent issues that affect the business community; Attend Bristol, TN and Bristol, VA City Council meetings; Advocate for pro-business legislation at the local, state and federal levels.*

**Strategic Priority: Conduct governmental relations meetings to discuss and review legislative issues that affect Bristol businesses. Action Items:** *Invite legislators and elected officials to attend governmental relations meetings to provide current information of pending legislation; Continue weekly meetings of the Government Affairs Committee throughout TN and VA General Assembly sessions to discuss legislation and action items.*

**Strategic Priority: Effectively communicate governmental issues to membership base. Action Items:** *Distribute governmental related e-mails from the U. S. Chamber, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Virginia Chamber of Commerce to members of the Governmental Affairs Committee and Board of Directors; Continue an annual legislative agenda with general public policies to improve the response time to pending legislation; Provide governmental updates at First Friday Business Briefings;*

**Strategic Priority: Maintain communications with elected officials. Action Items:** *Utilize conference calls and legislative visits to stay abreast of current issues and concerns; Coordinate and host candidate forums and events to provide the community and chamber membership with current legislative information; Host annual legislative reception; Effectively voice the chamber’s position on legislative issues, needs, and concerns to elected officials; Involve Board of Directors in discussion of issues that may be influenced by government entities; Participate with other chambers in regional legislative events; Position the chamber as a leader in building consensus and mobilizing resources for the purpose of strengthening businesses’ influence on public policy.*

**Strategic Priority: Educate membership on the governmental process. Action Items**: *Host a variety of membership events including Governmental Lunch & Learn, Government 101, legislative visits to both Richmond and Nashville to familiarize members with the capitol and state government process; Promote advancement of regional issues; Identify common goals between city and county government and business sector to ensure a proactive approach at the local level; Utilize legislative software, TrackBill, to inform members of pertinent legislation.*

**Community Relations (Bristol Youth Leadership, LEAD Bristol!, Keep Bristol Beautiful)**

**Strategic Priority: Assemble potential and established leaders in the Bristol community and develop their leadership skills through LEAD Bristol! and Bristol Youth Leadership. Action Items:** *Identify, educate and motivate emerging community and business leaders about the various facets of the region; Partner with regional higher education institutes and community colleges to engage participants in further educational and professional development; Create opportunities for class participants to seek solutions for current community needs through service projects; Develop networking opportunities for class participants through involvement with other community leaders and program alumni; Build upon current relationships with high school administrators; Evaluate each class session of LEAD Bristol! and BYL and implement any changes necessary to improve the programs.*

**Strategic Priority: Activate the Leadership Alumni Association. Action Items:** *Continue to build on a successful BYL Alumni Program for second year BYL students and evaluate the program including legislative visits annually; Enlist support of alumni to help secure financial sponsorship for LEAD Bristol!; Recruit graduates to serve on the LEAD Bristol! and BYL Steering Committees; Develop a LEAD Bristol! and BYL Alumni online database.*

**Strategic Priority: Utilize BYL and LEAD Bristol! Steering Committees. Action Items:** *Plan each class session and set principles for each class focus; Select qualified class participants from applications; Select community service projects for each class; Explore new and relevant components to emphasize value of leadership training.*

**Strategic Priority: Continue to provide the community with opportunities to enhance the quality of life in Bristol through the Keep Bristol Beautiful program. Action Items:** *Achieve the financial goals of the Keep Bristol Beautiful program by maintaining membership base, obtaining event sponsors, soliciting businesses for in-kind contributions, and monitoring expenses; Implement strategy to recruit environmentally conscious board members; Develop partnerships that will improve and protect the environment while balancing those with the needs of the business community; Identify best practices for Green Initiatives; Monitor legislation that impacts the environment; Encourage local governments to invest and plan for infrastructure improvements as well as green space.*

**Strategic Priority: Coordinate annual Keep Bristol Beautiful events.** **Action Items:** *America Recycles Day; Beautification Awards; Beaver Creek Cleanup; Great American Cleanup; Earth Day Celebration; East TN Environmental Conference; Special Event Recycling; Environmental Awareness; Household Hazardous Waste Collection; Litter Index; Regional Public Lands Day; South Holston Lake & River Cleanup; Telephone Directory Recycling; Sullivan County Conservation Camp; Cigarette Litter Prevention; Green Cities Initiatives; Community Outreach and Education*

**Strategic Priority:** Prepare accurate and timely KBB reports for Keep America Beautiful (KAB), Keep Tennessee Beautiful, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. Measure results of KBB program by comparing results for this year against reports from previous years and to KAB reports from similar communities. **Action Items:** *Implement an environmental education program in local schools; Continue a downtown community enhancement plan; Develop a more concise and informative KBB section of the website.*

**Strategic Priority: Communicate to the Bristol community the service and leadership opportunities offered by the Bristol Chamber of Commerce**. **Action Items:** *Distribute informational brochures for the Bristol Youth Leadership, LEAD Bristol!, and KBB programs; Use local & regional media and public service announcements to convey to the community the services offered by Bristol Youth Leadership, LEAD Bristol! and KBB programs; Present the LEAD Bristol! and BYL community service project results to civic, professional and community organizations.*

**Tourism Marketing**

**Strategic Priority: Effectively present a positive image to the community on the programs, policies and issues supported by the leadership of the Chamber and CVB. Action Items:** *Develop an aggressive initiative that promotes Bristol to regional and national media, targeting corporate and tourism markets; Further develop and strengthen relationships with the media; Maintain a comprehensive set of graphic standards, which supports the branding of materials, publications, web site and all documents of the Chamber programs; Continue a PR campaign of the importance of the CVB to the community.*

**Strategic Priority: Attend educational seminars and conferences on tourism, marketing and professional development. Action Items:** *Represent Bristol and attend educational seminars at the Tennessee Governor’s Conference, Virginia Governor’s Conference, Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and Tennessee Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Participate with regional tourism agencies, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia’s Crooked Road, Mountain South and Round the Mountain, in various educational tourism and marketing initiatives; Attend state-level professional development conferences through the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation.*

**Strategic Priority: Print and distribute quality brochures and marketing pieces that promote Bristol. Action Items:** *Produce Media Kit, Bristol TN/VA Visitor Guide, Meeting, CVB Services Guide and Historic Walking Tour; Contract with Print Distribution, a brochure distribution service covering 160 sites along I-81 and I-26 throughout Tennessee and Virginia; Provide brochures for Welcome Centers and Visitors Center across Tennessee and Virginia; Explore avenues for niche marketing to showcase Bristol’s unique attractions; Utilize web technology to offer all publications online and capture mail addresses for future visitor recruitment; Provide a monthly opt-in e-newsletter of hotel and travel incentives, sent to potential visitors.*

**Strategic Priority: Exhibit and attend trade and travel shows that market to the leisure, motor coach and meeting planner markets. Action Items:** *Promote Bristol via trade and travel shows through cooperatives like the Tri-Cities TN Travel Connection and Virginia’s Crooked Road group initiative; Participate in other travel and trade shows by sending promotional materials of Bristol to shows attended by representatives of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia’s Crooked Road, Tri-Cities Tennessee Travel Connection, and Mountain South International Cooperation.*

**Strategic Priority: Advertise in national publications, host familiarizations tours and provide information to journalists to maximize Bristol’s exposure on a national and international basis. Action Items:** *Host media familiarization tours in cooperation with the regional and state tourism offices; Advertise to the leisure travel market, convention and meeting planners, and group tour operators through a variety of publications; Apply for cooperative marketing/advertising grant funds; Participate in regional marketing/advertising opportunities to capitalize on interstate traffic; Attend media trade shows; Develop a password protected online media download center.*

**Strategic Priority: Continue relationships with local, regional and state organizations and participate in cooperative projects. Action Items:** Serving on the Board of Directors and Marketing Committees of the Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association, Virginia’s Crooked Road, Tennessee Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Round the Mountain, Wilderness Road and Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Partner with “Tourism Day on the Hill.”

**Strategic Priority: Assist with a variety of events, which showcase the Bristol community, contribute to the profit of Bristol businesses and increase tax revenue. Action Items:** *Partner with the City of Bristol TN and Bristol VA in hosting events; Identify and explore the possibilities of attracting new sporting events to Bristol through partnerships; Partner with area Convention and Visitors Bureaus in hosting sporting events that benefit the entire region; Assist area-sporting associations with events and special projects; Promote events such as Rhythm & Roots and Speedway in Lights that enhance the quality of life in our community; Integrate tourism for future of economic development, recruitment and relocation; Provide relocation page within Visitor Guide and online relocation section; Advocate with local and state legislators minimum levels of CVB funding from lodging and meal taxes collected.*

**Strategic Priority: Market and sustain a comprehensive relocation program “MoveTo Bristol.” Action Items:** Create supplemental marketing materials; Maintain “MoveTo Bristol” Website; Partner with Return to Roots (VA) and Retire Tennessee programs; Attend relocation and retirement tradeshows; Coordinate distribution of relocation packet with Customer Service Representatives; Develop measures to quantify relocation results.

**Finance**

**Strategic Priority: Ensure the future financial stability of the Chamber as a result of conservative budgeting for all programs. Action Items*:*** *Serve as a catalyst for successful programming and operations by developing and monitoring the annual budget; Work with management, staff and the Board of Directors on a process for accurate forecasting and budgeting; Perform a mid-year review of the annual budget. Develop a comprehensive plan to implement a reserve fund; Encourage the staff toward achieving increased revenue and decreased expenses within the budget process; Prepare and present clear and concise monthly financial statements and all related worksheets to the Board of Directors; Review internal operations and procedures and update accordingly; Develop a long-term financial plan.*

**Strategic Priority: Provide all information to ensure an unqualified opinion is obtained from an independent audit firm for the Chamber and the Foundation. Action Items*:*** *Prepare all financial documents for the audit team; Act as a liaison between the audit team and the organization; Ensure that Income Tax Returns are filed in a timely manner by the auditor. Ensure there is an effective system of internal controls in place.*

**Strategic Priority:  Ensure the completeness and accuracy of the financial records.   Action Items:** *Implement financial software designed to record bank deposits timely, monitor expenses and provide timely reporting to Management and the Board of Directors.*

**Strategic Priority: Work with the Membership team on Retention System. Action Items*:*** *Implement a Membership Management software system to track member activity, billing and activity in one central database.  Implement an integrated payment system through the Membership database.  Review and track list of monthly delinquent accounts with Senior VP of Membership  and the President/CEO.*

**Administration**

**Strategic Priority: Maintain quality management controls and achieve a 5-star rating. Action Items:** *Coordinate the Reaccreditations process, at five-year intervals, for the Bristol Chamber of Commerce; Work closely with the management team to ensure that Tennessee Quality Awards criteria are practiced throughout the organization; Encourage staff to keep important items to be utilized for reaccreditation; Encourage staff to look for methods, pro*grams and communication opportunities to prepare for next reaccreditation process.

**Strategic Priority: Provide comprehensive coverage in the Human Resource arena. Action Items:** *Provide effective training to the staff on matters that pertain directly to the working environment of the Chamber; Ensure that the present Employee Handbook is kept up-to-date and that all personnel have a current copy; Implement an orientation plan for new employees; Evaluate and select available Chamber Executive educational courses to most efficiently use the funds in the training budget.*

**Strategic Priority: Effectively monitor and determine appropriate salary levels, employee benefits, policies and procedures to parallel other comparable Chambers of Commerce. Action Items:** *Evaluate the medical, dental and optional life insurance programs to provide the greatest benefits to the staff at the most reasonable possible pricing for the Chamber; Constantly strive to evaluate policies and procedures to ensure that they provide the needed direction; Review and evaluate information obtained from the U. S. Chamber of Commerce to compare all employee benefits.*

**Strategic Priority: Organize and maintain the physical appearance and maintenance of the building and grounds. Action Items:** *Evaluate improvements to the Chamber’s facilities which best utilize the Gold Club funds; Plan and implement corner development and gateway project; Plan and execute improvements as necessary.*

**Target Audiences & Benchmarking Strategies**

**Goal No. 1***The Bristol Chamber of Commerce currently has approximately 700 members from a variety of industries. To meet the business needs of various industries, provide value and to keep membership retention high; we offer and market to members networking opportunities, business resources and services.*

**Target Audience: Current Members**

**Benchmark Strategies: Networking, Resources, Services**

**Networking**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

First Friday Business Briefing Promote networking, provide an opportunity for business visibility and inform membership of Chamber services and programs

Business After Hours Promote networking and provide an opportunity for business visibility

Ribbon Cuttings Promote and recognize individual member

Ground Breakings Promote and recognize individual member

Gold Club and Gold Club Breakfast Promote and recognize through added-value marketing in all publications

Chamber Boards & Committees Promote networking, visibility and inform

Ambassadors Promote networking

Workshop Training Promote networking and education of industry topics

Annual Awards Luncheon Promote networking, provide opportunity for business visibility and inform membership of chamber’s program & services accomplishments

LEAD Bristol!, Bristol Youth Leadership Network, educate and inform leaders of tomorrow

Keep Bristol Beautiful – Clean Ups Network, educate and community service

Social Media Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, ReverbNation, and Pandora for different programs – promote and network

**Resources**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

Monthly eNewsletter Promote and inform community and visitors of Bristol events

Weekly eNewsletter Inform membership of Chamber programs, services and events on a weekly basis

Member to Member Discounts Promote visibility and value

Annual Membership Business Directory Promote and recognize individual members

Chamber Voice Full page article in local newspaper to promote Chamber programs, services and sponsors to

community

Chamber Quarterly (Clout) Quarterly magazine to promote Chamber programs, services and sponsors

Business Referral Service Promote members to community and members

Website(s) and Banner Ads Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for business visibility, educate

Workshop Training Educate, network, provide opportunity for business visibility

Chamber Display Racks Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for business visibility

Mailing Labels Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for business visibility

Visitors Guide & Packets Promote, inform, and provide opportunity for business visibility

Overview Map of Area Community information and provide opportunity for business visibility

Group Tour and Meeting Planners Guide Promote, inform, and provide opportunity for business visibility

Governmental Relations Educate and inform on governmental issue affecting

business

Chamber Chat Weekly radio talk show to promote, inform, and provide opportunity for business visibility

LEAD Bristol Educate, network and inform leaders of tomorrow

Bristol Business Resource Center Educate and inform new and existing businesses

Relocation Packet Promote, educate and provide opportunity for business visibility

Webinars Promote and educate

Media/Releases/Advisory/Press Room Promote and educate

Radio Weekly radio talk shows (2) to promote

Phone Listing Promote

**Services**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

Chamber Infinity Program Service provided for members

Bristol Business Resource Center/SCORE Educate and inform new and existing businesses

Member to Member Discounts Promote, visibility and value

Meeting Room Usage/Rental Service provided for members

Notary Public Service Service provided

Certificate of Origin Service provided

Business Referral Service Promote members to community

Mailing Labels Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for business visibility

**Goal No. 2***By marketing through networking opportunities, resources and services, the Bristol Chamber of Commerce is able to educate about the benefits of becoming a member to the community.*

**Target Audience: Potential Members**

**Benchmark Strategies: Networking, Resources, Service**

**Networking**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

Community Boards & Committees Network, community visibility and inform

Membership Sales & Ambassadors Promote, network with the community

Workshop Training Promote networking and education of industry topics

Keep Bristol Beautiful – Clean Ups Network, educate and community service

Social Media Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Pinterest, etc. for different programs – promote and network

**Resources**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

Monthly eNewsletter Promote and inform community and visitors of Bristol events

Annual Membership Business Directory Promote and recognize individual member

Chamber Voice Full page article in local newspaper to promote Chamber programs, services and sponsors to

community

Business Referral Service Promote members to community and members

Website(s)/Banner Ads Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for

business visibility

Workshop Training Educate, network, provide opportunity for business

visibility

Chamber Display Racks Inform

Mailing Labels Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for

business visibility

Visitors Guide Promote, inform and provide opportunity for business visibility

Overview Map of Area Promote members, provide community information

Governmental Relations Educate and inform on governmental issue affecting

business

Bristol Business Resource Center/SCORE Educate and inform new and existing businesses

Relocation Packet Promote community & business, educate

Webinars Promote and educate

Media/Releases/Advisory Press Room Promote and educate

Radio Weekly radio shows (2) to promote

Signage Promote and educate

Phone Listing Promote

**Services**

**TOOLS OBJECTIVES**

Bristol Business Resource Center Educate and inform new and existing businesses

Notary Public Service Service provided

Certificate of Origin Service provided

Business Referral Service Promote members to community

Mailing Labels Promote, inform and provide an opportunity for

Business visibility

**Section VI: Communication Tools**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Audience** | **Frontline tools** | **Direct Tools** | **Indirect Tools** |
| Employees | Weekly full staff meetings / full staff retreat / division meetings | EmailsVoicemailsParticipation from Sr. Management at division meetings | Member publicationsMedia coverage and editorial mentions |
| Elected Officials | Personal meetingsLegislative receptions/meetings | Personal connection with Public Policy group | Media coverage and editorial mentions |
| Board of Directors | BOD meetings | EmailsMinutes from board meetingsWebsite | Member publicationsMember eventsSocial MediaMedia coverage and editorial mentions |
| New Chamber member  | Member Relations ExecutiveWebsiteNew member packetFFBB Introduction | EmailsWebsiteAmbassadorMember publicationsMember events | Social mediaAmbassadorsChamber staffMedia coverage and editorial mentions |
| Prospect | WebsiteFFFBBChamber staffVolunteer | EventsWebsite | Social MediaChamber StaffEventsMedia coverage and editorial mentionsWord-of-mouth |
| Small Business | VolunteerWebsiteMember publicationsChamber staff | EmailsWebsiteAmbassadorMember publicationsMember events | Member Relations ExecutiveSocial mediaBoard of directorsAmbassadorsChamber staffMedia coverage and editorial mentions |
| Large Business | VolunteerWebsiteMember publicationsChamber staff | EmailsWebsiteAmbassadorMember publicationsMember events | Member Relations ExecutiveSocial mediaBoard of directorsAmbassadorsChamber staffMedia coverage and editorial mentions |

**Section VII: Tactics**

**Standard Event Public Relations Breakdown**

Depending on the event, below are ways to promote them:

• E-blast invitations

• Event promotion (media pitches, media alert, press release, post-event follow-up)

• Radio

• Print ads

• Event program (including sponsor ads)

• Event signage

• Clout

• Promotional item

• Promotional event banner

• Custom table tents

• PowerPoint / Other multi-media

• Internal publication promotion

• Weekly e-blast newsletter for Membership

• Printed calendar of events

• Unique event e-blasts

• Television

• Postcard Invitation

• Sponsor recruitment flyer

• Submission to community and media calendars

• Member listing

• Website

• Use of photos from events

• Social media promotion

**TACTICS:**

**Media Relations and Publicity Guidelines - Internal**

All publicity about Chamber activities -- including story pitches, news releases, quotes and statements about programs, letters to the editor, etc. -- should be coordinated and handled through the Communications Department. Every member of staff should cooperate fully to ensure an adequate flow of information to the membership regarding Chamber activities, programs and services.

The Communications director is authorized to handle all publicity for the Chamber (as directed by Chamber President & CEO) and must ensure that information released is within established Chamber guidelines and available for public consumption. All statements to be made public concerning committee or divisional activities, policies or programs, through news releases, radio programs or other media, shall be coordinated through the Communications Department.

Whenever possible, the chairman of the board should be quoted by the media. If he or she is not available, the president, appropriate vice chairman, chairman-elect or senior staff member should be quoted.

If contacted by a member of the media, please respond with one of the following and then notify the Communications director immediately:

• Thanks for your interest, and if you’ll hold a minute, our Communications director can help you with that.

• Yes, we can help you with that information. If you’ll hold, our Communications director will be right with you.

• Certainly. The person you need to speak with is our Communications director. If you hold, I’ll transfer you.

These policies also apply to volunteers. Anyone speaking on behalf of the Chamber should do so in coordination with the PR director.

**Publicity Development:**

The Communications Director will:

- determine schedule and content for press releases and media alerts.

- draft and distribute releases

- Monitor press contact list

- do direct pitches to media on programs and initiatives of the Chamber

- track publicity “mentions” to ensure the value for PR is being measured

- adjust publicity efforts when publicity trends drop

- use all tools available to promote the Chamber, i.e. social media

**Public Relations Plan for Press Conference**

1. Compile information about press conference (speakers, topic, time, location)

2. Create media alert to send to media

3. Follow up with media to attend

4. Print out media alert or post press release for press conference along with other information

5. Identify key speakers for interviews

6. Set up location where all media can see and hear and make sure Chamber signage is present

7. Ask attending media what specifically they are interested in and who they would like to talk with (with TV try to pinpoint visuals)

8. Arrange interviews and try to place interviewer behind event or Chamber sign to get more promotion if for TV

9. Follow-up with media if needed

**Public Relations Plan for Major Events**

1. Attend committee meeting to get an idea of what theme and content is about

2. Identify key speakers and what will be the attraction to the conference, also visuals for t.v. stations

3. Identify who will speak to media on behalf of the event (usually chairman)

4. Meet with department to identify potential media outlets for pre-interviews, attending event and post

interviews

5. Create timeline of when press releases and media alerts will be sent

a. Start promoting event with general release one month to six weeks out

b. Begin to talk with print reporters about potential story to promote event

c. Send second release with more specifics (keynote speaker or topic) one or two weeks later

d. Call TV and/or radio stations for potential pre-interviews to promote event

e. Send third release (if possible) with more specifics one or two weeks later

f. Send general release again if there hasn’t been any coverage

g. Send media alert 1 – 3 days ahead depending on how many media are already attending

h. Follow up with media to attend or confirm

6. Print copies of media alert or press releases for event day along with other information they may need (bios, how many attending, agenda)

7. At event identify who will speak to media

8. Ask attending media what specifically they are interested in and who they would like to talk with.

9. Arrange interviews and try to place interviewer behind event or Chamber sign to get more promotion if for TV

10. Follow-up with reporters if needed

**TACTICS:**

**Publications and Advertising – Member Opportunities**

**Weekly e-blast update - The Chamber’s Weekly Email Newsletter – circ. 1,500**

The Chamber’s electronic newsletter is your only weekly opportunity to get your message directly into member inboxes. It features current Chamber news and events and is sent electronically to more than 1,500 members. This newsletter gives our members great exposure and a venue to publicize upcoming events.

**Clout – The Chamber’s Quarterly Magazine – circ. 2,000**

The Chamber’s quarterly magazine (March, June, September, December) provides members with updates on Chamber programs, Member awards and achievements, governmental meetings/receptions, etc. Clout was recently redesigned with broader content added and is now a popular publication for our members. Advertising is available in Clout for members.

**Membership Directory – The Chamber’s Informational Guide for Members – circ. 2,000**

The annual Membership Directory provides members with useful information on not just members but all that Bristol has to offer, along with statistics, photos

**Website:**

Chamber – www.bristolchamber.org

With more than 15,000 visitors each month, the Chamber’s website is packed full of information about Chamber activities including events and successes as well as community resources. Web sponsors are given the opportunity to link directly to their own site providing an immediate marketing opportunity.

**TACTICS:**

**Advertising the Chamber Brand**

Goals

Primary:

Position and Increase awareness of Chamber program of work / successes

- markets not currently engaged in Chamber

- actively engaged members

Secondary:

- Increase non-dues revenue through an enhanced awareness of the Chamber among its current members - Increase volunteerism/involvement levels of members, Raise event attendance levels

- Increase overall dues revenue through increased new member recruitment, member retention and dues upgrades - Grow the number of Chamber members

**Possible Approach**

Donation from member to produce creative and serve as media buyer/firm secured majority of trade related to media and production for image campaign.

- Firm developed approach to take perceived ideas about Chamber (see challenges/threats) and turn them on their head

- Concept of networking organization but the deeper look reveals strength and breadth of the Chamber’s work

- Use strength of logo for Chamber for brand development

- Use broad approaches to reach several target markets – different personalities created to help “tell the story”

 • Create varied media versions of personalities – print, radio, television

 • Focus on strong, simple messages using CHAS and the website for outdoor

 • Key element – not a sales campaign, focus on perceptions / serves as foundation for account execs. and volunteers when making a sales pitch (marketing vs. sales)

**Components**

Print advertisements

- Run a series of advertisements in local newspapers and magazines

- Television advertisements (Produce a television commercial)

- Radio advertisements (Produce a series of radio commercials)

- Outdoor advertisements (Run an outdoor campaign combining bulletin and poster-size boards, possibly billboards on interstate)

- Social Media

**Section VII: Measurements**

Objective A: Provide support to the various Chamber divisions, initiatives and affiliates in an effort to help them achieve their objectives

1. Marketing deliverables delivered on schedule, under budget and with approval of division head/event manager

2. Event attendance increases compared to previous years, surpasses estimates (varies by event)

3. Event revenue for divisional events reach (target to exceed) revenue expectations (varies by event)

4. Marketing strategy developed meets need of initiative/affiliates goals

5. Annual member survey returns positive measurement for events, initiatives and affiliates

6. Ambassador contacts returns positive measurement for events, initiatives and affiliates

7. All campaigns reach (target to exceed) revenue and quantity goals

Objective B: Generate greater visibility for the Chamber through an aggressive communication and marketing plan that not only keeps the membership informed about our activities, but also elevates the understanding of the value of the Chamber and its activities.

1. Image campaign

2. Response rate on member surveys

3. Unsubscribe rates to publications minimized

4. Advertising revenue and distribution opportunities increase

Objective C: Develop and implement a public relations strategy that will influence public opinion regarding the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and create more goodwill for it among its major audiences, including members, non-members, the public sector, etc.

1. Tracked printed mentions (would need a service to track)

2. Tracked Multi-media mentions

3. Social media fans/followers increases

4. Attendance at events by local media increases (tracking by event)

Objective D: Promote member networking events in order to increase member participation and retention with the Chamber. Encourage the information exchange between members, and identify opportunities for members to enhance their success.

1. Attendance at Networking events (Business After Hours, Ribbon Cuttings, First Friday Business Briefings, Annual Awards Ground Breaking) increases

2. All events meet and/or exceed revenue goals.

3. Member events are rated highly (Perhaps conduct an annual Membership Survey, online or through in Ambassador calls).

****

**Marketing Plan**

**Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music**

**Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music** is a new marketing initiative of the Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau tourism and music marketing committees to enhance Bristol’s music brand (PickBristol.com), further promote Bristol as the Birthplace of Country Music and a live music capital – the live music capital of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and generate interest in opening the NEW Birthplace of Country Music Museum in summer 2014.

Over the last three years, the Bristol CVB oversees a Bristol music marketing committee (Pick Bristol) to brand and market Bristol as the Birthplace of Country Music and consists of representatives from the following organizations:

Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau

Birthplace of Country Music Museum

Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival

Believe in Bristol / Main Street Bristol

Bristol Chamber of Commerce

City of Bristol TN

City of Bristol VA

Paramount Center for the Arts

Tombras Marketing (and other ad agencies as needed)

The Bristol CVB, in cooperation with its marketing partners, aims to acheieve the following primary goals with the Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music Initiative:

1. Generate interest in attracting visitors and a viral “buzz” that the Birthplace of Country Music Museum – an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution – is opening in historic downtown Bristol in summer 2014.
2. Promote [www.pickbristol.com](http://www.pickbristol.com), [www.mybristolvisit.com](http://www.mybristolvisit.com) and TDTD brnading in all marketing advertisements and initiatives.
3. Encourage more visitors to travel to and explore all aspects of Bristol – thus increasing tourism expenditures in Bristol and the state of Tennessee.
4. Encourage group travel to Bristol by capitalizing off of our strategic location along I-81 and produce a group tour guide for motor coach operators.
5. Advertise in targeted markets to encourage more visitation to Bristol
6. Invite and host national media and group tour companies in (2) FAM tours after the opening of the Birthplace of Country Music Museum

The Bristol CVB will be the lead partner in ad creative, placement, and purchasing in this marketing initiative, with financial and additional creative support coming from Birthplace of Country Music / Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival and Believe in Bristol – Main Street Bristol. Fulfillment of media leads will be processed by the Bristol CVB and shared among partners as well.

Bristol: Birth of Country Music Marketing Budget:

1. $106,480 Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau
2. $50,000 from Virginia Tourism Corporation specifically to partner with the Bristol CVB (and TDTD) in the 1927 Bristol Sessions Project
3. $80,000 2013-14 TDTD Partnership Marketing Program Funds
4. TOTAL BRISTOL CVB: LAUNCHING THE BIRTHPLACE OF COUNTRY MUSIC MARKETING BUDGET: $186,480

**PROGRAM CONTENT**

**TARGET AUDIENCE AND MARKET RESEARCH**

Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music Marketing Initiative will target vacationers who are music enthusiasts to experience the live authentic experience of Bristol’s music heritage and live music scene, and visit the NEW BCM Museum. Secondarily – while using music as a “hook”, Bristol will promote its diverse southern culinary options, retail shopping, and abundant outdoor recreation. We chose this tactic for several reasons, the primary being that Bristol is unique in that it is the official Birthplace of Country Music whose notoriety is becoming known world-wide.

Bristol hosts events and attractions surrounding Bristol’s musical heritage as the official Birthplace of Country Music attract more than ***300,000 visitors annually***. In addition, other attractions compliment Bristol’s musical heritage like the Bristol Motor Speedway with ***1.1 million visitors annually,*** Bristol’s thriving and historic downtown district with more than 45 antique and specialty stores, an abundance of cafes and restaurants, street parties, festivals, special events, and attractions like Audio Tours, Country Music Mural, Paramount Center for the Arts, Downtown Centre, Bristol Train Station, and Farmer’s Market. Bristol is home to some of the state of Tennessee’s most unique visitor attractions, and the Northeastern Gateway to Tennessee as a whole.

According to Bristol CVB in-house market studies as well as research gathered by Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival in 2012, the top 5 over-night markets for Bristol visitors and music aficionados (based on website visitors, zip codes, and visitor inquiries) are:

* Northern Virginia / DC Metro (especially along I-81 corridor from Roanoke North)
* Charlotte / Raleigh, NC
* Nashville, TN
* Cincinnati /Columbus, OH
* Pittsburg, PA (and I-81 central PA)

Top 5 day-trip visitors to Bristol and Bristol-music event outside of the Tri-Cities TN/VA (based on website visitors, zip codes, and visitors inquiries) are:

* Asheville/Boone/Western, NC
* Southwest Virginia (Coalfields Region and New River Valley)
* Roanoke/Lynchburg, VA
* Eastern Kentucky
* Knoxville (and Northeast Tennessee), TN

**MARKETING MESSAGE AND PROGRAM**

Our marketing message is to brand Bristol as a thriving live music city as the official Birthplace of Country Music, through first-hand experiences, Bristol’s unique, historic and living music scene through PickBristol.com, BristolRhythm.com, BirthplaceofCountyMusic.org, BelieveinBristol.org, along with general travel information and other attractions located at MyBristolVisit.com, social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc).

Components of the Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music initiative for the proposed use of funds include:

### Print Advertisements and Online Marketing: $35,985

A variety of print and online publications, including trade magazines, newspapers, and travel inserts focusing on leisure, group tour, and niche heritage tourism markets. Bristol’s strategic geographic location allows us to capture a significant portion of the leisure and group travel markets as we are within a day’s drive of more than 70% of the U. S. population and located directly along Interstate 81 and adjacent to Interstate 26.

#### Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine

(1) 1/2 page, 4C advertisements (May ’14)

Circulation: 115,000 per issue

Cost: $1,355

Description: Definitive guide to outdoor sports, health and travel in the Southeast. Many outdoor enthusiasts are also music aficionados, as well as Bristol VA opening a Cabela’s Outdoor Center in summer 2014.,

#### Facebook.com

(2) Display ads for Pick Bristol and MyBristolVisit (Oct ’13 – August ‘14)

Cost: $15,000

Description: Social media marketing by promoting facebook pages of PickBristol and MyBristolVisit as well as links to websites to encourage “likes” and visitation to websites.

#### Group Tour Magazine

(4) 1/6 page, 4-color advertisements (Oct ’13, Jan ’14, March ’14, June ’14)

Readership: 15,000 per issue

Cost: $4,880

Description: Bristol’s strategic geographic location allows us to capture a significant portion of the group travel market as we are within a day’s drive of more than 70% of the U. S. population and located directly along Interstate 81 and adjacent to Interstate 26. Group Tour Magazine features southern markets to US and Canadian motorcoach operators.

#### Tennessee Vacation Guide

(1) FULL page, 4C advertisement

Cost: $17,735

Description: Bristol’s live music scene, burgeoning arts community and diverse attractions will be promoted in the flagship travel publication of the state of Tennessee.

**DIGITAL ADVERTISING: PAY-PER-CLICK & BANNER ADS: $30,000**

The Bristol CVB will contract with The Tombras Group (or other ad agency), to develop and implement and manage our PPC and Banner advertising campaigns that will deliver a measureable return on investment.

Tombras will effectively and efficiently target our consumer and business audiences through PPC and Banner ads across multiple search platforms. This is one of the most effective forms of advertising, because the searcher is in hunt-mode for vacations in our region, and/or for our type of experience and destination.

Proprietary agency software will be used to research our target markets in an effort to determine the most current search trends we will want our campaign to track with. Tombras will develop PPC ad copy and Banner ad content that include strategic keywords and a strong call to action. Finally, Tombras will optimize and benchmark the campaigns around those discovered trends as well as the most effective components within our overall campaign.

The scope of work for these efforts includes:

* Competitive benchmarking
* In-depth keyword research & analysis
* Writing highly engaging ad copy/banner content
* Campaign setup
* Implement sitelink extensions for PPC
* Multivariate testing of ads & keywords to ensure we have the most effective ones running
* Daily, weekly and monthly maintenance and optimization
* Dayparting: optimizing ads around times of the day that receive the highest ROI
* Weekly campaign performance, overview, & suggestions
* Monthly trended analysis & executive summary of overall performance

Digital media will work hand-in-hand with our organic SEO efforts and is a highly effective tool to increase conversion for ticket sales. The Tombras Group is an accredited Google Certified AdWords firm.

For Banner Advertising, “Intender” profiles that match our offering. For example, profiles could include those who intend to vacation in Tennessee or those who enjoy Americana/Bluegrass music, are race fans, or are interested in mountain destinations or historic regions and live in our drive markets. To achieve this type of targeting, Tombras uses the following tactics:

**Behavior Match:** Click stream indexing to target site types and categories that

score highest for users that match our tourism offerings.

**Behavioral Targeting**: Using third party data segments, this includes real-time bid

cookie data for users that are actively planning a vacation or searching topics that match our defined list of topics and behaviors.

**Search Re-Targeting:** Serves display impressions to users that search many relevant search phrases that match our strategic keyword list.

**Domain Re-Targeting:** Retarget users that visit the Bristol CVB landing page across the advertising network site list.

**DMA-level geotargeting:** We will concentrate our banner ad buy in the DMAs (Designated Market Area) that match our drive markets.

**Notes:**

*Contextual ads are displayed within web content based on topics we specify.*

*Behavioral ads are displayed based on behavior for web browsing we specify.*

*Retargeting ads are displayed when a user/viewer performs a search of one of our keywords or hits our landing page and doesn’t convert. An appropriate display ad is then served across the ad network to reach the user wherever he or she goes.*

### Invitations for Group Tour FAM and Media FAM: $2,500

The Bristol CVB will be hosting 2 FAM tours targeted towards national media and group tour companies in August 2014. Bristol CVB staff will work with the state tourism office to invite targeted media and group tour companies. Completion date: May 2014.

### Video Production for Social Media: $2,500

Bristol CVB will contract with Olivia Ellis to produce a variety of first-person promotional videos featuring Bristol attractions and events. Completion date: April 2014.

### MyBristolVisit e-Newsletter: $4,000

A NEW redesigned bi-monthly, opt-in eNewsletter to promote Bristol attractions, hotel specials, giveaways, festivals, special events, etc. Completion date: Jan 2014.

1927 Bristol Sessions Revisited Project: $100,000

1927 Bristol Sessions Revisited

Vision and purpose

The Bristol CVB will partner with Birthplace of Country Music is producing a 2-CD set (approximately 30 songs) from the legendary 1927 Bristol Sessions, which served as the catalyst for Bristol being named the Birthplace of Country Music®, will be re-recorded by many of today’s top stars and hit makers. A media blitz, which will include press events with national media outlets, will take place, introducing the CD.

The CD will be produced by Grammy-winner Carl Jackson. Jackson, a renowned musician/singer/songwriter/producer, has worked with many of the top names in the music business, assuring this project will receive an abundance of attention and acclaim. There is an opportunity for the project to be picked up by a major label.

Potential artists may include but not confirmed:

Brad Paisley

Mary Chapin Carpenter

Dwight Yoakum

Phil Vassar

Nora Jones

Roseanne Cash

Dolly Parton

Ability to work with producer on other potential artists that have Tennessee roots.

In addition, a launch concert featuring some of the artists performing on the CD will be planned in conjunction with the opening of the Birthplace of Country Music® Museum, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. Please note that this is determined by artists availability and pricing.

The Bristol CVB, along with the Birthplace of Country Music will also launch the CD set at a filming broadcast of the Grand Ole Opry in summer 2014.

Marketing of the1927 Bristol Sessions Project

* Should the CD project be released on a major label, it will be marketed nationally. This would allow access to some of the industry’s most acclaimed celebrities.
* Additionally, the Bristol CVB: Launching of the Birthplace of Country Music will place advertisements and/or request editorial space in several national music publications, including: American Songwriter, Billboard, Guitar Player, Mojo, Oxford America, Old Time Herald, Relix, Rolling Stone, Smithsonian Magazine and Vibe.
* The Bristol CVB: Launching of the Birthplace of Country Music will reach out to television, radio and print media in a number of significant markets, including Nashville. The BCM also will work with the Country Music Television network, as well as the Great American Country network to market and publicize the CD.
* An array of social media promotions, via Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau, Pick Bristol, Birthplace of Country Music and Bristol Rhythm and Roots, will take place.
* eNewsletter databases, which includes in excess of 20,000 recipients, will receive public relations and marketing information.
* A nationwide Promotional Contest and Grand Prize Giveaway also will take place.
* The CD will be featured at a Media and Travel Writer FAM tour during the launch concert and opening of the BCM Museum in 2014.

Deliverables to the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development

* The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation will receive the following in return for their investment:
* Credit on the 1927 Sessions Revisited
* “Tennessee’s We’re Playing Your Song” & “Virginia is for Lovers” Visitor Pavilion at the August CD launch event pavilion
* Prominent banner on the main stage with the Bristol Sign as a backdrop
* Invitation to participate in a media and travel writer FAM tour during the launch concert and opening of the BCM Museum
* Invitation for a representative from Tennessee Department of Tourist Development (and additional partner Virginia Tourism Corporation) to speak at four national press conferences and major events:
	+ Announcement of the 1927 Sessions Revisited
	+ Completion of the 1927 Sessions Revisited
	+ Announcement of the Launch Concert
	+ Grand Opening Gala of the Birthplace of Country Music with invited national media, state legislatures and other dignitaries
	+ Booth space at Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion to promote Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.

Museums are economic engines, resulting in additional visitors to the Cities of Bristol, Tennessee and Virginia

* According to the *American Alliance of Museums*, there are approximately 850 million visits each year to American museums, more than the attendance for all major league sporting events and theme parks combined (483 million)
* 78% of U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities
* Governments that support the arts see an average return on investment of $7 in new taxes for every $1 that the government appropriates
* Due to the impending opening of the Birthplace of Country Music Museum, the area surrounding downtown Bristol TN/VA has already seen additional economic growth including: plans for a boutique hotel, several additional restaurants, retail stores, brewery, and additional special events.
* Educational enhancements and programming to the Cities of Bristol, Tennessee and Virginia
* Museums spend more than $2 billion a year on educational activities
* Museums receive approximately 55 million visits each year from students in school groups and student travel

**PEFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

**EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAM**

For online and print media thatutilize click-through impressions and reader-response cards within every issue, the Bristol CVB will maintain an inquiry log to serve as a tracking mechanism. Other means to measure the Bristol CVB: Launching the Birthplace of Country Music Marketing Initiative include:

* Increase number of unique visits by 30% to [pickbristol.com](http://pickbristol.com) from 46,840 in 2012-13 to 60,892 unique visits in 2013-14.
	+ By maintaining “live stats” inquiry system recording number of hits, individual visits, and actual pages viewed per person, and length of visit on the [www.pickbristol.com](http://www.pickbristol.com) and [www.visitbristoltnva.org](http://www.visitbristoltnva.org) websites.
	+ By gauging the location of visitor requests (zip code, registration to online MyBristolVisit eNewsletter, etc.) to see effectiveness of marketing in target market areas
* Increase number of unique visits by 15% to MyBristolVisit.com from 93,217 in 2012-13 to 107,200 in 2013-14.
	+ By maintaining “live stats” inquiry system recording number of hits, individual visits, and actual pages viewed per person, and length of visit on the Bristol CVB website.
	+ By gauging the location of visitor requests (zip code, registration to online eNewsletter, etc) to see effectiveness of marketing in target market areas
* Increase the number of “fans” on PICK BRISTOL facebook account by 50% from 13,776 in 2012-13 to 20,664 in 2013-14.
	+ By tracking comments, postings and interactions on both facebook pages
	+ By tracking number of followers, shares and “re-tweets”
* Tracking of MyBristolVisit eNewsletter opt-in requests by 50% from 15,157 in 2012-13 to 22,736 subscribers in 2013-14.
	+ By maintaining and recording the number of opt-in Bristol eNewsletter visitors (including source location) with the database marketing capabilities.
* Increase number of Bristol Visitor Guides distributed by 20% from 125,000 in 2012-13 to 150,000 in 2013-14.
	+ By tracking the number of overall visitor guides mailed out from inquiries
	+ By tracking locations (zip codes) Bristol Visitor Guides are mailed
	+ By tracking number of Bristol Visitor Guides downloaded online (Bristol eGuide).
* Increase number of attendees and ticket sales to the Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival by 5% from 45,000 festival attendees to 47,250 in 2013.
	+ By monitoring zip codes of attendees from ticket sales to see if marketing placed during the campaign resulted in visitors from these markets / publications.
	+ By maintaining “live stats” inquiry system recording number of hits, individual visits, and actual pages viewed per person, and length of visit on the Bristol Rhythm & Roots and [www.pickbristol.com](http://www.pickbristol.com) websites.
* Increase number of attendees to the Believe in Bristol “Border Bash” music summer 12-concert series by 20% from 30,000 attendees to 42,000 in 2014.
	+ By monitoring zip codes of attendees from ticket sales to see if marketing placed during the Pick Bristol campaign resulted in visitors from these markets / publications.
	+ By maintaining “live stats” inquiry system recording number of hits, individual visits, and actual pages viewed per person, and length of visit on the Believe in Bristol and [www.pickbristol.com](http://www.pickbristol.com) websites.

**Cross-Promotion of Tennessee Department of Tourist Development’s**

**“We’re Playing Your Song” Branding**

All the projects listed previously are self-sustaining projects for the Bristol CVB to expand and enhance upon it music brand in the future. The TDTD and SunnySide Trail logos, weblinks, and branding will be used in all promotional/marketing opportunities and advertisements (as possible).

Additional opportunities the Pick Bristol campaign will promote the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development’s “we’re playing your song” branding includes:

* In 2013-14, TDTD logo and weblinks will be listed on all Bristol CVB publications and websites
	+ [www.mybristol.com](http://www.mybristol.com)
	+ [www.pickbristol.com](http://www.pickbristol.com)
	+ [www.MyBristolLodging.com](http://www.MyBristolLodging.com)
	+ Bristol Visitor Guide (125,000+), Bristol Historic Downtown Walking Tour Brochure (25,000+), Group Tour Guides (2,000+), etc.
* TDTD listed on national media and group tour FAM invitations
* TDTD logo listed on the Banner and stage logos for TDTD at 2014 Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion Festival
* TDTD promoted in several Bristol CVB (and our music partners) social media
* TDTD invited as a guest to at a media FAM tour during the opening of the Birthplace of Country Music Museum
* TDTD invited as a guest to at a group tour FAM tour during the opening of the Birthplace of Country Music Museum
* Speaking opportunities to state legislature and media at opening Gala of the Birthplace of Country Music Museum
* Speaking opportunities at press conferences to launch and release the 1927 Bristol Sessions Project
* TDTD exposure at the Grand Ole Opry broadcast to launch and release the 1927 Bristol Sessions Project (request to host this show is in work)
* Bristol CVB is open to any other opportunities and suggestions to assist in promoting TDTD.